

Tallahoma, Apr. 1st 1832.

Ans April 26

Dear Father,

Your two letters of March 31st & Apr 1st reached me last evening, with the very opportune enclosure of \$50. It has relieved me of the inconvenience of owing about everybody in Tallahoma, & I breathe freely again. The great delay of the Paymaster had put us to great straits. Hardly a man of us had any money, and board bills have been accumulating dreadfully. It costs about seven dollars a week to board here decently. Butter & eggs & fresh meat have to be brought in from the adjacent country, and of course the people ask high prices, as the supply is small & the consumers are numerous.

I did think that by this time we should be off to the front. But ~~though~~ the prospect is very uncertain. The unexpected removal of Gen. Slocum will make a delay in our movements, I think. I expressed

my opinion about this change in my
letter to Mother. It is the universal
opinion in the 12th Corps -

Stocum ~~was~~ exceedingly popular
with his Corps. We all had perfect
confidence in his ability & great
respect for his personal character.
Now he is superseded in favor of
a man whose character no one
can respect & whose ability to
handle a Corps in action is very
questionable. The prospect is not
cheering. I have no doubt that
the matter was decided upon at
Washington with reference to politics
more than any military reasons.
The order came direct from the
War Department. I don't think
Gen. Grant had anything to do
with it. Another piece of in-
justice connected with the affair
is the firing that incompetent
old woman, Gen. Howard, a Corp.,
while Stocum is shelved at
Ticksburg. Gen. Howard is given

the 4th Corps, Gen. Gordon Granger being
shipped. I believe Granger is a much
better man than Howard, who has
gained great reputation because his
Corps always runs away.

I can't write or think of anything
except this most unfortunate
change.

All our officers and the rest of the
officers of this post called on Gen.
Stocum the other night to bid him
good-bye. We stayed there several
hours, and excepting that the occasion
was not one to rejoice at, we had
a very pleasant time.

I believe you will have to take
this ^{for a} letter, for I can't write more
now. Will write to Mother

about in a day or two -

Love to all -

Very aff yours

H. S. Perkins

P. P. Reau send me some stamps.

though, if we can escape the rough-
scuff that our patriotic friends at
home have been providing as sub-
stitutes for their now valuable
carcasses. I should like to see some
of those swells shouldering a musket
in this hot sun, and standing four
hours at attention for having dirty
guns. I have no patience with
the apathy at home. People seem
to think (young men, I mean) that
there are enough men in the war,
& that when they are used up,
the war had better stop.

The behaviour of the 44th is dis-
gusting. They blow us if they had
taken Richmond. Simple handed,
refuse to expose themselves to the
slight danger that the Pennsylvania
Militia were allowed to face,
and then keep themselves before
the public with "Scenes of Camp
Life, Dress Parades" & other
fiddle-faddle. Ugh!
I am getting ill-natured. Goodbye
for the present. Love to all,
Yrs very affⁿ
W.S.P.

Camp 2^d Mass Inf.
Kelly's Ford Va.
Aug 15th 1863.

Dear Father

Your letter of the 10th
reached me yesterday. I write a few
lines now to enclose the receipt
for the money which I sent by
express. I am sorry to hear from
you that Crofton is not likely to
be with us soon. I fear the hot
weather has affected his wound.
Apart from the pleasure of having
him here, it would be very convenient
to have the number of officers increased,
for picket comes pretty often.
For the last few days ^{through} have had
a very easy time. No writing, no
picket & only one drill. I am
knowing the advantage of fun, decidedly.
The heat there must be far worse
than anything we have to endure.
However, when Gilman had taken

Charleston, which I feel confident of, you will have another long rest, while we are indulging in a Pale Campaign. This is a queer sort of life. At one time utter idleness, & then again long-continued hard work.

I wonder at myself sometimes for not feeling homesick. I never do, even when it is uncomfortable enough here.

You ask about the changes in the Army of the Potomac. All I know is that Gen. Meade has gone to Washington & Gen. Spocum is in command of the Army temporarily. I don't believe that there is any change thought of. Gen. Meade has the confidence of the Army, and we should all be disgusted enough if he were turned out. He may have gone to Washington to consult about a change of position. There is some talk about taking up the old Falmouth & Aquia Creek line, on account of the greater convenience of communication.

Our present line from Alexandria to Rappahannock Station is too long and exposed. It is hard to get supplies over it, and our sutlers' wagons are constantly captured. Perhaps too they mean to make a Cavalry raid, as soon as the new horses come. Lee's rear must be as much exposed as ours.

I hear there is talk in the papers about the 2^d Mass. being sent home to recruit. I don't believe a word of it. In fact I haven't seen any mention of it, but the men have such a rumor flying round the regiment.

Of course there is as much reason for it as for sending the 1st, but the 2^d never had any luck, and I don't believe it's going to begin now.

Why don't the conscripts come? We are ready for them. I have 14 men for duty, a nice little skeleton to fill up. I am willing to wait

it would be very hard to copy it any larger & yet preserve the likeness perfectly.

I am very glad to learn that the sword was recovered. It is what I would rather have than anything else. I hope that Bob will keep it bright. The blade should be rubbed with an oiled rag, and if there is any rust, emery paper will take it off. The hilt can be kept bright with Tripoli, a paper of which I left at home.

I shall always make it my business when I come home, to keep the sword shining, as it should be.

Lewis Stackpole's letter was just what it should have been. I knew that he appreciated Jim. How could he help it, living with him as he did?

I shall write to him, to thank him.

I received a very kind letter from Gen Abbott, expressing his sympathy. He could feel for us, remembering his own loss.

I must close here, for the wind is blowing my paper every way.

I will answer Bob's letter by the next mail. There is no time before this one goes out. Give my love to all & believe me most affectionately yours

W.S.P.

P.S. We are to have no conscripts, so that the question of remaining with the regt after war may be decided when we come home, & then see what is to be done.

Written
24 Oct

Camp 2^d Mass Inf -
near Elk River. Tenn -
Oct 16th 1862.

Dear Father

I was obliged to send a very hurried letter the other day, as the mail was going immediately, and today is the first leisure day I have had since then.

I have been on picket once and on fatigue once since then, and it has poured in torrents almost all the time. My shelter has been but little protection from the rain, especially as the wind blew it down one night and left me clinging to the blankets.

Before writing of other matters, I will dispose of one or two matters of business.

One of my men, named James S. Leonard, who was killed at Gettysburg, left \$40 with the Chaplain, and his father has written to have it sent to him by express. As there is no express here, the Chaplain can't send it & I thought it would be a good plan for him to hand it over

to me, and I would ask you to send \$40 to Mr. Edmunds. Perhaps by & by I can send it to you by express, when matters get a little more settled. Will you be so kind as to send the money to Mr. Thomas B. Edmunds, Billerica, Mass -

Then the next matter is that of the winter. If it had not yet been sent, I think the direction had better be "Wartrace, Tenn, via Nashville". Wartrace is Corps Headquarters, and anything would be safer there than at Decatur, which is Division Headquarters.

Col. Moore is at Wartrace, acting as Adjutant General to Genl. Hocutt, and he would probably see that anything for the regiment was properly sent. Still I don't want it directed to his care.

We are settled down here now at Allisonia ~~for~~ permanently, I think. Requisitions have gone in for wall-tents for the line officers, and camp kettles, &c for the companies.

We are going to guard the bridge here, which is quite an elaborate one.

We have in all six regiments here, the 2^d, 3^d Wis., 157th N.Y., 102^d Ohio, 1st Mich. Eng. & 1st Tenn. (Colored). There is also the 2^d Kentucky Battery - Our Corps is scattered along the road, Corps & Brig. Headquarters being north of us, and Division Headquarters being 4 miles south.

Continued. Oct 17th -

Here I was interrupted yesterday - We are building houses now, regular winter quarters. Everything looks permanent.

I hope Mother will make up a box of good things for Thanksgiving, as we can't buy anything here now, except the common commissary stores. I should like a supply of note paper sent too, for I can't buy any, & have to borrow in order to write this letter. Also I should like a small photograph-book. You ask for my opinion about that photograph of Jim's. Of course I can't tell about the large one, for I never saw it, but I was perfectly satisfied with the one we had, & I should think

He was smart enough, but lazy,
& required constant attention to keep
him at work. So in Alexandria
I sent him back to his company.
Then in New York, I picked up a
small white boy, named Eliza
Ford. He was so very useless that
when we got down to Raccoon Ford,
I dismissed him, or rather told him he
ought get another place if he wanted
to leave me. So he now is domesticated
in the 10th N.Y. Then I took another
man from the ranks, named Patrick
Cronin. He did pretty well, but he
hadn't the necessary enterprise to
be a good forager. He was rather
stupid too, & inclined to go to sleep.
So I was glad to get my new boy
& send Cronin back to the ranks.
Now I hope I shall be able to
keep William for the rest of the
time I am in the service, for it is
troublesome to teach a servant any
wanting, & then lose him if find him
incapable. Now I have filled up
20 pages & will stop for the
present. Perhaps I shall close
here. Yrs affly M.E.P.

of Col. Cogswell, opened it by
mistake & immediately gave the
order to us to strike tents &
pack up. The Colonel has not
come back yet from a ride into
the neighborhood & we are sitting here
with everything packed up, waiting
patiently. It is always so in the army.
One never knows where he is going
or how long he is going to stay in
a place.

Now, the order may have come to
Elm Stocum to move his camp,
& yet we may not get off till to-
morrow or next day. The packing
up is a little premature.
It is curious how one part of
his letter contradicts another.
First I tell you I expect to
go into winter quarters here,
& half an hour afterwards,

wrote Oct 16 1863

everything is packed for a move.

I must find some means of despatching the letter before it grows more ponderous & contradictory.

Unfortunately the mail arrangements here are nothing at all.

I don't know how to send a letter, and I don't know how a letter should be directed in order to reach me. I should think however that this would be correct "12th Army Corps (Hocum)

Army of the Cumberland, via Louisville, Ky. I put in the (Hocum) because there are various Corps in this country belonging to the reserve, & I think one of them is called the 12th. At any rate it will do us harm.

I asked a man at a Station some miles back here, what Corps he belonged to, and he said the

12th. When I told him there was only one 12th Corps, he said "Well I don't know the number of the Corps. It is a 'reserve Corps'."

I have just got a new servant. He is a rather white nigger named William Frazer. He comes from Lanesville, Ohio. I picked him up at Stevenson, Alabama. He had got on board the car at Lanesville & followed the Regiment ever since. He seems to be a very good boy indeed. He is smart & willing.

I have had rather a curious experience with servants. When I first joined the Regiment, I had no man from the Company, named Wiggins. He was stupid & inefficient, and when I came back after Gettysburg, I took another from the Company, named Sam Barnes.

I get the A. H. journals regularly -
They are very good reading, indeed,
but I should be glad to receive
any daily papers, too, or the Semi-
Weekly advertisement that you used to
send. Papers never come amiss
here. When we have read them
we paper our houses with
them. Board houses, you know, will
have cracks, especially when they are
made of green boards, which all our
houses are made of, and we find
papering quite necessary.
I haven't seen a daily paper now for
several days, and don't know the news,
though I have heard that Forrest is
up in Kentucky somewhere on a raid.
I don't think he will come here -
He wouldn't have much chance -
These cavalry don't fight infantry,
they can't afford the loss, especially
of horses. Troops pass through
daily, regiment after regiment, to the
front, veterans, I mean. They have
to foot it all the way from Nashville -
We were lucky to escape that accident.
Love to all. Is off for N. E. J.

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Tullahoma, Tenn.
March 30th 1864.

Dear Father,

I received your letter yester-
day and was very glad to hear from
you. A letter from you has
become quite a rarity.

You were quite correct in supposing
that we were still at Tullahoma, but
as I have already mentioned, in one of
my letters, we are not going to stay here
very long. Division Commanders have their
orders to have their commands fully
supplied with quartermaster's stores &
ordnance stores, and as soon as those come,
I suppose we shall march to Chat-
tanooga. The new system on which
they are going to guard this road seems
to me to be very little better than no
guard at all, but I suppose Gen.
Sherman knows what he is about.

The new plan is to leave garrisons at
Kashville & Memphis, and only
small detachments in block-houses at
other points on the road. I fear
that we shall hear a good deal
more of Forrest & Wheeler & Morgan
& Keady, when the 12th Corps leaves,
than we do at present, and, for
my part, I should not care to have
much travelling to do, between Nashville
& Chattanooga.

You mention in your letter that Moore
(the Colburn's brother) is at work raising funds
for recruiting the regiment. I hope he
will get us ~~some~~ a couple of hundred men.

Then we should be able to get along.
A recommendation has gone up for
a recruiting detail of 2 officers & 10
men & we expect that it will succeed.

Drayton will probably be one of the officers
sent home.

I am very much pleased to see that

Gen. Grant is opposed to the plan of frittering
away our forces by sending large corps
down the coast &c. It seems pretty
plain that Burnside & Hancock are
both to go to the Army of the Potomac.
The 24th too seems to be joining them.

It is a step in the right direction.

Make the Armies of the Potomac &
the Cumberland large enough to crush
the Armies opposed to them, and we shall
be all right. There does seem a good
chance now that the war will be
over this year.

I am sorry to hear of Lee's failure -
The Stevenses are not, I suppose, a rich
family, so that they can't afford to have
many failures. For my part, I wonder
that there are not more failures in these
wonderful times of paper money.

When Pay-Day comes, I thank my stars
that Uncle Sam can't help paying
his army, whatever else he may do.

The only thing I want is some vegetables & fruit. Living on fried ham & fried hard bread with the occasional change to fried ^{fat} beef (the last very tough) is rather tiresome.

My servant got a pail-full of green blue-berries the other day, and stewed them up with plenty of sugar, & they tasted better than anything I have tasted for months.

I think Sherman will be compelled to get some vegetables, no matter what the expense & trouble may be, for in the long run this kind of living can't be healthy.

I hear the Colonel is coming out soon. I hope he will bring my watch. It is only after a watch is gone that one knows the value of it. It is certainly useful on picket.

Give my love to all
I believe we
go off soon

W. S. P.

Camp 2^d Man Infantry
near Marietta, Georgia
June 28th 1864.

Dear Father

In your last letter you were so kind as to say that you wanted to send me some money, & would begin with \$5 as an experiment. To-day one of my recruits wanted a chance to send home \$100, so I agreed to give him a draft on you for half that sum & another officer took the remainder & gave him a draft on his father. You will probably get the draft about as soon as you get this letter. I would not have taken so large a sum as \$90, but I wanted to help the fellow, and there is no chance of my getting any pay for months. So I shall want the money some time before pay-day comes, and it is safer than sending money by mail. In writing

P.S. As I mentioned to Mother, I am short of groceries. I have only six

the draft I omitted the initial
of my middle name & put in after-
wards. So it is no forgery.

We are still skirmishing with
the enemy near Kenesaw Mountain
and are not much near Marietta
than we were a week ago.

Yesterday the line was advanced
about half a quarter of a mile, and
there was a lively cannonading,
during which we lay round behind
our breastworks, and sweltered in
the sun - Today it is pretty quiet,
and very hot. The rainy season
seems to have ceased, & the hot
weather begun. I suppose Gen-
Sherman is doing something somewhere,
though I don't know where.

I think it is very likely that we
shall move tomorrow, as I hear
stories about ten days rations,
and some clothing was issued
yesterday. It is two months

today since our regt started from
Tullahoma. Though we have been
a good while on the go, it has not
been a hard campaign thus far,
except paper stones & Christian commis-
sion games to the contrary with-
standing. The only thing that is
particularly irksome is the constant
building of breastworks. Our regiment
has built breastworks eight times,
and we have been in the second
line several times, when we didn't
build & the first line did.

Then the expedition to Kingston
relieved us from building twice
when the rest of the brigade had to.

But we needn't grumble. The
duties that we have done can't
be a circumstance to the work
in Virginia. That has been, I should
think, almost too much for human
endurance. They ought to have rest.
I really feel as fresh as when
we started two months ago.

Our loss was trifling. In fact it was not much of a commage.
On the 15th our fleet left its place in line and crossed over to this island which is principally a coco swamp. We were followed the next day by the rest of the brigade. The enemy opened on us with a battery on the S.C. shore and destroyed one of our rice mills & killed one man. - At night we went to camp & have not been troubled since then we have not been troubled. There is no danger of starving on this island. There are 2000 bushels of unshelled rice, and the hulling is a simple, though laborious process. The live almost eat it, having it at every meal. - We don't know how long we shall be in getting into Savannah, but don't let that trouble you. Mother is sending me a Christmas box. We have had communication with the fleet. It is only 12 miles to our base. I want ~~some~~ ^{two} flannel shirts (large) & some stockings sent by mail as soon as possible. I have outgrown my shirt, ~~but~~ rather they have shrunk & I can't button them. Love to all. I will write more at length when I get some paper out of my valise which is over the corner very early in the morning.

Camp 2^d Mass Infantry
Cryggle Island, Savannah River
Dec 18th 1864

Dear Father,
I received yesterday the first mail for several weeks, including letters from you, Boston Nov. 28th, postmarked Nov. 3rd, 7th & 14th and papers from Oct 31st to Nov 12th. Since I last wrote, we have as you know executed a change of base, which has rather astonished the rebels. The 20th Corps left Atlanta Nov 15th, & the 14th Corps followed on the 16th. Our Provisional Brigade, 2^d, 33^d men & 11th Co. were the last troops in town. We waited until the town was thoroughly destroyed, doing guard duty on what was left, and then followed the 14th Corps in the afternoon of the 16th. All the business part of the town was burnt by order of Gen. Sherman, and many houses shared the same fate through the destruction propensities of the soldiers. We marched to Milledgeville in 7 days, & there joined our Corps in the morning of the 24th of Nov. - On the morning of the 30th the Army started again, and marched by way of Sandersville to Station No 13 on the R.R. At Sandersville our Brig was in the advance & skirmished with the enemy's cavalry, driving them rapidly. When we got on the R.R. we began systematically destroying

the track. The Army of the Tennessee (now called the Right Wing of the Army of Georgia) had destroyed the track from Gordon to No 13, and the 2^o Corps took for its share the next 35 miles. We remained on the R.R. some days, tearing up & burning all day. It was hard work, but effectual - we saw nothing of the enemy on our way. After destroying the track we crossed the Ogeechee River & continued our march to Savannah. We found within half a mile of the Stockade at Milledgeville where our prisoners were, until recently, confined. Some of our officers went to see it, and found several dead bodies lying there unburied. Probably they were too sick to be removed & died after the rebels took off the others. The prison was entirely open on top & the prisoners had no protection from the sun & rain excepting some turf huts that they dug for themselves. In one respect they were better off than in other prisons. There is a stream of water running through the place where they could wash, and near by a very fine spring. Still it must have been a horrible place to be confined, all the country around being very low &

swampy. We reached the neighborhood of Savannah on the 10th of Dec, and established our lines around the place, about 4 1/2 miles from it. The 14th Corps was on the left, touching the river, next the 20th, then the 15th then the 17th. But as yet, in consequence of Gen. Foster's failure to destroy the R.R. on the north, we had no communications with the fleet, and on the 11th the last rations were issued, & very short ones too. Two hard bread & a half for five days. Something had to be done. So on the 12th the 15th Corps was relieved by the 14th and our Corps extended to the river, while the 15th was sent to the extreme right to open communication. It was found that the rebel lines extended to the Ogeechee. So on the 13th Gen. Hazen's division of the 15th Corps assaulted & took Fort McAllister in 15 minutes. "The coaches line" was thus opened. The first fruits of it were the mail that we got yesterday. We have not got our hard bread yet. I forgot to mention in chronological order that on the 9th the 1st & 2^d Brigades of our Divⁿ assaulted & took a couple of small forts on the road about 12 miles out of Savannah. There were only a few hundred men in them with one gun.

omit to write regularly to
Send papers, especially the
Ask Journal. I should like
to have you continue my
Subscription. My year is
up in February. I haven't
rec'd my number for some
weeks now.

To go to another subject.

We have had a full issue
of clothing & are ready for a
Campaign excepting in respect
to rations. We have been
on full rations since we
came here. Many men
are sick. The low & poor diet
is, no doubt, partly the cause.
I am well, as I have been
all along. This campaigning
agrees with me.

Love to all.

Yrs affly
W. E. P.

Camp near Savannah Ga.
July 15/65

Dear Father,

My note this time
will be brief. We are under
marching orders. We expect
to move to-morrow morning at 7 o'clock
and our destination is Sister's Ferry
up the river about 40 miles.
Our Corps ~~has~~ crosses into South
Carolina & pursues the left bank
of the river. The 14th Corps follows
the right bank. The Major Wing
starts from Port Royal in the same
direction. Where we go to, after
reaching Sister's Ferry I can't say.
It looks as if we were threatening
Augusta & Branchville or Columbia
at the same time. I don't believe
we shall touch Augusta.
Neither can I tell whether

our communications are to be kept open or not.

As far as Lute's Ferry, I should think they probably would.

I suppose my box, if it has started, will spend considerable time at Adams Express Office in Savannah. Well, such is the fortune of war.

I was very fortunate last night to receive a package of underclothing of which I was very much in need.

I shall not probably wear out so many socks on this campaign as the last, for in the absence of our adjt, who has gone to Hilton Head & will probably be left behind I am acting in that capacity. I shall get off

part of duty & have a horse to ride. I can't expect it to last a great while though.

Col. Loggwick is brevetted and assigned to a brigade in the 3rd Div of our Corps.

He takes Storrow on his ~~staff~~ as an aide. Storrow is a lucky fellow to get so good a place with so little experience as he has had. However he has education which is a convenient quality for a staff officer.

St. Morse is in command of the regt. We are pretty well reduced. We have only four captains & four lieutenants on duty with their companies, one field officer & two surgeons. If you don't hear from me for some time, don't

has a shot hole through it -

Yesterday the 23^d. nothing occurred near us, except the throwing up of three lines of works in front of ours. This is now a very strong position. There was fighting way off on the left yesterday, principally cannonading. At least we were too far off to hear the musketry well. We now occupy the direct road from Marietta to Atlanta, the shortest road. If they can't break through anywhere it looks as if they had lost Atlanta -

I have written now till I am tired.
If Perk takes no special interest in
the piece of red cotton that I send, she
can put it away. It is not often that
one gets hold of a piece of a rebel
flag. Love to all.

Very affly yours -
W. E. P.